Channel: Elena Delgado

URL: https://youtu.be/gnybOE-ryJM

Title: Why The Audra Winter Situation Scares Me (as a teen author)

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Introduction
0:00
If people see Audrey Winters as the
0:02
whole representation for the YA authors,
0:05
like why fantasy authors under 25, then
0:08
how is anyone supposed to see the rest
0:10
of us as legitimate?
0:17
[Music]
0:22
When I like first saw and heard about
0:24
the situation, it was literally my
0:26
greatest fear playing out in front of me
0:29
because I am 16. My name is Elena, by
0:33
the way. Hi, nice to meet you. I've been
0:36
working on my project, which is YA
0:38
fantasy, for the past 6 years. As a
0:41
teenager, and I'm intending to
0:43
self-publish, too. Yeah, starting to
0:46
sound sound pretty familiar, huh? I'll
0:48
touch on the situation briefly just as
0:50
like a recap, but if you clicked on this
0:52
video, you probably already know what's
0:53
going on. Um, yeah, and then I'll talk
0:56
about what like us, the young authors in

0:59
this category, same category as Audrey
1:01
Winters, can do to preemptively
1:06
make sure that people don't think we're
1:08
also grifters cuz the large majority of
1:11
us are not, or at least not
1:12
intentionally. Also, just a disclaimer.
1:14
I don't know if it's Audra Winter
1:16
Winters, so I might be using them
1:18
interchangeably there. So, yeah. All
Recap
1:20
right. So, here's the lowdown on what
1:22
happened. So, I'm again not a drama
1:25
channel, so I'm not going to go super in
1:27
depth. Uh, but in short, what happened
1:30
is that there was an author on Tik Tok
1:32
called Audra Winter, and she wrote this
1:35
book called The Age of Scorpius. She
1:37
garnered a lot of support for it, a
1:40
large amount of pre-orders. She claimed
1:42
that it was like like the most pre I I
1:44
don't even know. It was like the most
1:45
pre-orders that ever happened, like
1:47
something like 6,000, which of course is
1:49
impossible to verify cuz she
1:51
self-published and most self-published
1:53
authors aren't going to release that
1:54
kind of information. And she also had a
1:57

Kickstarter. I think she had been
1:59
writing it since she was 12. Um, and at
2:02
this point, I believe she's 22. Um, and
2:07
so yeah, but I mean it was pretty
2:08
successful. She was doing something
2:10
right. Um anyway, so the book launched
2:12
and people started to realize that the
2:14
pros, the story, kind of everything
2:18
about the book was just like not good.
2:21
Um a lot of people compared it to being
2:23
a first draft and her claim of having
2:27
professional editors was starting to be
2:29
challenged. And so after the hate, she
2:31
got really defensive and onboarded more
2:34
supplemental nonsense, like you know,
2:36
freelance artists and eventually some
2:39
editors from the audience, which really
2:42
were more of co-authors by how much she
2:44
was like expecting them to do. And but
2:46
so the biggest problem is that all
2:48
people really wanted was for her to like
2:50
edit the dang thing, not give them more
2:53
art. And so at this point, a lot of
2:55
people tapped out or just gave up hope
2:58
on the revised version of Age of
2:59
Scorpius, which was supposed to come
3:01
out, you know, like this October. I'm
3:03

making this in August 2025. It's
3:05
supposed to come out like October 2025,
3:08
I think. So, at the very least, but she
3:11
did claim that the price is going to be
3:12
higher because it's a $30 book, by the
3:15
way. 30 freaking dollars. Like, I'm a
3:18
broke teenager. You know how far I can
3:20
stretch $30?
3:23
like anyways. So yeah, people do not
3:26
want more art. So where does this leave
3:28
the rest of us? So like teen authors and
3:30
stuff, people generally tend to distrust
3:34
us as a whole and the merits of our work
Where Does This Leave Teen Authors?
3:37
because well our frontal loes aren't
3:39
exactly fully developed. And I feel like
3:42
after the Audra Winter situation, people
3:44
probably distrust us even more. And for
3:46
me personally, it makes me kind of
3:48
scared to put my book out there because
3:50
I'm worried people won't perceive me as
3:52
legitimate or they'll think my content
3:54
is derivative cuz well, I've only lived
3:58
16 years and I only have memories of
4:00
like, I don't know, like 12 of those
4:02
years. Um, and so they just might assume
4:05
like, oh yeah, you don't have enough
4:06
experience to write a book or like write

4:09
something meaningful. You might just
4:10
think that like oh teenagers writing
4:12
books is don't teenagers write like
4:15
fanfiction and stuff and I don't want to
4:17
be likened to like the One Direction
4:20
Watt pad fanfiction from like I don't
4:23
know 2012 or something like I promise
4:26
you that's not what I'm writing. I think
4:28
that self-publishing as a whole might
4:30
also lose some credibility because of
4:32
how easily accessible it is for people
4:34
like Audrey Winter and also a guy slop
4:39
factories to create stuff and put it on
4:42
there which sucks cuz self-publishing is
4:44
the most financially viable publishing
4:47
solution for broke teenagers like me. We
4:49
just don't have time or money for
4:51
literary agents and tried publishing.
4:54
I'm choosing to self-publish like she
4:56
did. And I'm just scared that Audrey
4:58
Winters gives young authors a bad rap,
5:01
making breaking into the already crowded
5:03
market even harder. And it's hard to
5:06
have algorithms on any platform show my
5:08
work. And it's even harder to get people
5:10
to engage with it. And even more
5:12
difficult to get them to wait another

5:14
like 7 months until my book comes out, A
5:17
Universe Gone Ar. Shameless plug. and
5:21
it's the hardest of all to convince them
5:23
to spend money on a book. Not little
5:24
hope is lost, though. I'm not trying to
5:26
be a doomer here. Uh there's a lot of
5:29
ways that you can prove that you're not
What Teen Authors Can Do
5:31
Audrey Winter if you're another teen
5:33
author. First of all, you have to write
5:35
a compelling book. It doesn't have to be
5:37
life-changing. It it just needs to be
5:39
compelling for your market. If you're
5:41
writing like middlerade or ya, don't
5:44
worry about making it like incredibly
5:46
thematically rich or writing like the
5:48
next how to kill a mockingb bird if you
5:50
want to. Like you can do that. Like I'm
5:52
not going to stop you or anything. I'm
5:53
just someone talking on a screen. But
5:56
you should be trying to make your book
5:57
good. I'm not saying your book I'm not
5:59
saying you should let your book be bad
6:01
because you're still trying to compete
6:02
with literally every other author that
6:04
ever was and ever will be. So, edit,
6:07
revise your book, do the things that you
6:10

need to do to make your novel be to what
6:12
you think will be the best. Um, and make
6:16
sure to spend some time away from it too
6:18
to come back with fresh shot. Secondly,
6:20
realize that readers are taking a risk
6:22
on you and people will honestly run for
6:25
the hills if you've got a big ego or if
6:27
you're relying too much on like pity
6:29
marketing. Gratitude and humility are
6:32
very important, especially when people
6:35
are taking a gamble with their time and
6:36
money. As an aside, price your book
6:39
realistically, too. Unless it's like a
6:41
million pages long, you should not be
6:43
pricing your book at $30. This leads me
6:46
to my next point, point three, which is
6:48
that you cannot get overly attached to
6:50
your book. Because if you're going to
6:52
work on it for as long as Audrey Winters
6:54
has or I mean if you're someone like me
6:57
and if you've worked on your project for
6:58
like 6 years, you start to get a little
7:00
bit emotionally attached, don't stop.
7:02
Please, please, please don't don't get
7:05
too attached to your book because it
7:06
will make it impossible for you to
7:09
accept criticism. Also, just as a quick
7:12

detour, I feel like there needs to be a
7:14
quick distinction between good
7:16
criticism, like constructive criticism,
7:19
and bad slashdestructive criticism. A
7:21
good rule of thumb to follow is that if
7:23
the criticism is too broad, don't take
7:27
it unless you were asking specifically
7:29
for broad criticism. What I mean by that
7:31
is like your protagonist is annoying
7:34
versus your protagonist is way too
7:36
passive. One of those you can't really
7:38
do anything about. you're just like,
7:40
"Okay." And with your protagonist is too
7:44
passive, there's a little bit more to
7:45
work with there. Number four, consider
7:48
giving your prologue or your first
7:50
chapter for free once you finish it, of
7:52
course, in a blog post or newsletter.
7:55
It'll help build your trust and
7:57
credibility with your audience. If they
7:59
can like see what how you write and then
8:02
they can decide like, "Okay, yeah, this
8:05
is something I'm interested in or no,
8:07
this is not." people will be way less
8:09
hesitant to buy your book if they know
8:11
what they're getting into. Last point,
8:13
keep being an author, if you're
8:15

presenting yourself online as an author.
8:17
Unless you have like varied content from
8:19
the start or your your shift is very
8:22
clear, people will follow you because
8:24
you're an author and because they want
8:25
to follow your book and they honestly
8:28
don't really care about what the weather
8:30
was like outside where you lived that
8:32
day, how to make six figures publishing
8:34
a book or whatever Audra Winter was
8:37
trying to do. Don't lose touch with your
8:39
work. I know this sounds kind of
8:41
contradictory considering my last point
8:43
of don't get too attached to your work,
8:47
but you have to find a healthy balance
8:49
between those two things. So, I guess to
8:51
conclude like what I think young
8:54
authors, teen authors like myself should
8:56
learn from this situation is that things
8:59
are shifting and people don't think that
9:02
time and passion alone are enough to
9:04
guarantee a good book. Yes, it's harder
9:08
for us teenage authors to publish a book
9:10
and be perceived as legitimate, but it's
9:12
not impossible. And there are ways to
9:14
prove that our books are good and are
9:17
worth reading. I hate to ask, but
Outro

9:21
subscribe, please, if you found any of
9:24
this useful and like, comment, whatever
9:26
else. Or don't. I I honestly won't force
9:29
you. Um, shameless plug again. My debut
9:33
novel, The Universe Gone Arry, comes out
9:35
spring 2026. And see you later. Yeah,
9:39
that's it.

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